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early settlers reached the prairie-plains they moved westward with great freedom. Russia has found it easy to extend eastward a peaceful conquest to the shore of the Pacific Ocean, in part because of the levelness of the land.

The building of highways and railways on a plain is easy and relatively inexpensive. Little grading is required, and roads follow any desired route. This means a multiplicity of roads, and consequently ample opportunity to market the products of an area. The cost of maintaining roads on level land is not so great as it is in mountains.

The uniformity in climatic conditions leads to uniformity in plant and animal life, and hence, to a certain extent, in interests and industries. As a rule, a large area of a plain recognizes the same governmental authority. The climatic uniformity which plains present have in some cases a disadvantageous effect. This is seen in Siberia, where there is very little progress. Here the winters are so long and so severe that the enforced life within doors unfits the peasant for work when spring arrives. Owing to the marshy condition of large areas roads are practically impassable during the summer, and cultivation is retarded until late in the season [pp. 118-119].

The book is divided into three parts. The first part deals with physical geography; the second part, with economic geography, and the third part, with the regional geography of the United States. Throughout the book emphasis is placed on the human elements. The book is a valuable contribution to the field of secondary-school geography.

Secondary-school history.—The authors of a new text¹ have attempted to make the content of their volume accord with the views of the so-called "new history" group and their method of treatment meet the demand of the latest theories of the schools of education. They have given comparatively little attention to political development and have emphasized the social and economic aspects of our history. Though recognizing that the topical method may be "pushed too far," they have acceded to what they conceived to be a modern demand and followed it as far as they deemed practicable. In order to satisfy those who are unwilling to make any concessions, they have furnished a topical syllabus near the end of the book. In deference to what is perhaps another very modern notion also, they have devoted more than the usual amount of space to the period since the Civil War. They have done this within the limits allowed the modern writer of textbooks by resorting to the expedient of eliminating the story of Spanish achievement in North America and omitting biographical sketches of heroes and accounts of wars.

The authors are at their best when discussing the economic and social phases of United States history since 1870. In this respect it would seem that they have excelled most authors who have undertaken a similar work. In fact, it may be doubted whether there is any serious flaw in the last eleven chapters of the book. Unfortunately this cannot be said of some of the other portions of the text. For instance, it is perhaps erroneous to consider the

¹ CHARLES A. BEARD and MARY R. BEARD, *History of the United States*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1921. Pp. xv+663.

early colonial experiments in common tillage as an attempt to apply socialistic theory; the treatment of colonial schools and colleges is too scanty; the clear, concise, and otherwise commendable discussion of the framing of the federal constitution of 1787 fails to note what are perhaps the most significant features of that document; it may be seriously questioned whether the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions emphasized states' rights and nullification as much as individual rights which it was thought the duty of the states to defend; such a conventional discussion of the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War embodied in what purports to be a very modern book is disappointing, to say the least. Surely a more careful perusal of two of the references which they inaccurately cite at the close of chapter xii, supplemented by Justin H. Smith's *The Mexican War*, would at least have led them to suspect that there might be two sides to this phase of our international relations.

With regard to form and supplementary aids the work deserves moderate commendation only. There is a deficiency in the number of maps but a profusion of good illustrations and cartoons, and numerous inaccuracies are found in the titles given at the close of the chapters.

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European-history texts.—The two-year European-history course proposed by the Committee on Social Studies in 1916 has unquestionably come to stay. Two of the first books in the field conforming to the proposal of this Committee were *Outlines of European History* in two parts by Professors Breasted, Robinson, and Beard. While the *Outlines* were by no means a failure, they did not fully satisfy the authors, hence the recent appearance of two new books covering the same field as that treated in the *Outlines*. The first volume¹ of this new series treats of the period to 1789. The extension of the account to this date will meet with favor in many quarters, because of the desire to emphasize the more modern period. While the second volume² begins with the Age of Louis XIV, it gives due emphasis to things modern, half of it being devoted to the period since 1870. This emphasis will also meet with the approval of many, because of the paucity of suitable material on this important period of European history.

The general organization and arrangement of the volumes are admirable in many respects. First, there is a general outline of the entire field covered by each volume. The divisions are appropriately named and numbered as Book I, Book II, etc. These large topics are divided into chapters, and each chapter into several topical sections. The chapters, as well as the topics, are arranged with strict attention to chronology. Throughout the two

¹ JAMES H. ROBINSON and JAMES H. BREASTED, *History of Europe—Ancient and Medieval*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1920. Pp. xiii+665+xiv.

² JAMES H. ROBINSON and CHARLES A. BEARD, *History of Europe—Our Own Times*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1921. Pp. xii+616+xxi.